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My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we enter into this Lenten season, the Church once again invites us to use this opportunity to share more fully in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ. It is essential that we cultivate a deeper sense of prayer, fasting and almsgiving to better offer our lives to Our Lord.

As we make our way through the Triduum and to that glorious day of the Lord's Resurrection, I pray that all of us will be ever more attentive to our spiritual devotions and especially to the Word of God during these forty days. May the guidance of the Holy Spirit assist us in our Lenten journey.

REGULATIONS FOR LENT AND THE EASTER TRIDUUM

Lent is the principal season of penance in the Christian year. Priests, religious and laity are strongly urged to develop and follow a program of voluntary self-denial, attentiveness to prayer, and especially to works of charity and mercy.

Everyone of 14 years of age or over is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, March 1, 2017, and all the Fridays of Lent.

Everyone 18 years of age and under 59 years of age is bound to fast on Ash Wednesday, March 1, 2017, and Good Friday, April 14, 2017.

On these two days of fast and abstinence, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, only one full meatless meal is allowed. Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted on these two days, but liquids including milk and fruit juices are allowed. When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige.

To disregard completely the law of fast and abstinence is a serious matter.

May our Lenten journey bring us closer to the cross and our Resurrected Savior.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Most Reverend Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C.
BISHOP OF PEORIA